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THE SUPPER  
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J. J. GURNEY



William E. Tatum













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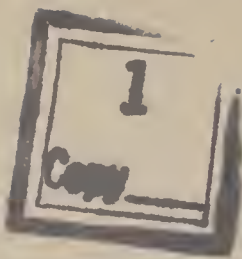
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THE DISUSE OF TYPICAL RITES  
IN THE  
WORSHIP OF GOD.

BY  
J. J. GURNEY.

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# ON THE DISUSE

OF ALL

## TYPICAL RITES IN THE WORSHIP OF GOD.

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THOUGH it is almost universally allowed among Christians, that, when the new covenant was established in the world, by the death of Christ, the ceremonies of the Jewish law were abolished, there are two religious rites of a very similar description, the maintenance of which is still very generally insisted upon, as necessary to the edification, and true order of the church of Christ. These rites are *baptism with water*, and that participation of bread and wine, which is usually called the *sacrament of the Lord's Supper*. So great are the virtue and efficacy ascribed to these ceremonies, that they are considered, by very many Christians, to be especial means of grace, or mediums through which grace is conveyed to the soul; and not a few theologians, both ancient and modern, appear to have entertained the extraordinary opinion, that the rite of baptism, more especially, is indispensable to salvation.

On the other hand, I am informed, that in some parts of the continent of Europe, there are small so-

cieties of pious Christians, by whom water-baptism and the ceremony of the Lord's supper are entirely disused;\* and that such is the fact in the Society of Friends is generally understood. It is our belief that we have been led out of the practice of these rites by the Spirit of truth; that we could not recur to them without grieving our heavenly Monitor; and that, in fact, they are not in accordance with the entire spirituality of the gospel dispensation.

In order to explain our views on the subject, I must remark, *in limine*, that the ceremonies in question, as now practised among Christians, must be considered as forming a part of *their system of worship*: for they are, in the first place, in the strictest sense of the terms, *religious rites* performed in supposed obedience to the command of the Almighty; and, secondly, they are employed in immediate connexion with the more direct, and generally with the public acts of divine worship. Such being the state of the case, the objection of Friends to the use of these ordinances will be perceived to have its foundation in a principle of acknowledged importance, and one which is clearly revealed in the New Testament, that, under the Christian dispensation, the worship of God is not to be formal, ceremonial, or typical, but *spiritual*.

\* This is the case, as I understand, with the Inspirés in Germany, and with the Malakans in South Russia.

This principle was declared in a clear and forcible manner by Jesus Christ himself. When the woman of Samaria, with whom he condescended to converse by the well of Sychar, spoke to him of the worship observed by the Jews at Jerusalem, and by the Samaritans on Mount Gerizim, our Lord answered, “Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. . . . . The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father *in spirit and in truth*; for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”\* In this passage of our Lord’s discourse, there is an evident allusion to two separate and distinct systems of worship, belonging to two different dispensations; and it is equally clear that the change was then about to take place from one of these to the other; that the one was about to be abolished—the other to be established. The system of worship about to be abolished, was that which the Jews were accustomed to practise at Jerusalem, and which the Samaritans had endeavored to imitate on their favorite mountain. Now, every one who is acquainted with the records of the Old Testament, must be aware that this was a system

\* John iv. 21—24.

of worship chiefly consisting in outward ceremonies, in figurative or typical ordinances. The greatest nicety of divine direction accompanied the institution of these various rites, which were a "figure for the time then present," and which "stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed," on the Israelites "*until the time of reformation.*"\* But now that *time of reformation* was at hand, and the law was pronounced by the great Mediator of the new covenant, that men were henceforward to worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The new worship which was thus to distinguish Christianity was to be *in spirit*; because it was to consist, not in outward rites of a formal and ceremonial nature, but in services dictated by the Spirit of the Lord, and in the direct communion of the soul with its Creator. It was to be *in truth*; not simply as arising from a sincere heart—a description which might apply with equal force to the abolished worship of the Jews—but because it was to consist in substantial realities. It was to be carried on, not through the old medium of types and figures, but by the application to the heart of the great and essential truths of the gospel; for the type was now to be exchanged for the antitype, the figure for the thing figured, the shadow for the sub-

\* Heb. ix. 10.



stance.\* Such then, and such only, is the true character of Christian worship.

We ought by no means to disparage the forms and ceremonies of the Jewish law, as connected with the covenant to which they appertained. We cannot forget that this ministration of worship was appointed by the Almighty himself; nor can we refuse to acknowledge that it was, in its own time, glorious. For, although these ceremonies could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience, yet was the whole system, of which they formed a part, perfectly adapted, by Divine Wisdom, to the condition of the Israelites; and the ritual law served a purpose of high importance to the ultimate promotion of the cause of righteousness. To that purpose we have already alluded: it was to typify, prefigure, and *introduce*, the better, purer, and *more* glorious ministration of the gospel; for it is precisely in reference to these ceremonies, that the apostle describes the Jewish law as being “a figure for the time then present;” and as “having a *shadow of good things to come*.” †

But, important as was the purpose thus answered by

\* A similar explanation of our Lord's expressions, respecting Christian worship, will be found in the Commentaries of the following biblical critics:—Theophylact, Calvin, Jac. Cappellus, Grotius, Rosenmüller, Whitby, Gail, Scott, and Doddridge.

† Heb. ix. 9; x. 1.

the establishment and maintenance of the ceremonial law, it was one of a merely temporary nature. When the Messiah was come—when he had revealed the spiritual character of his own dispensation—when he had died for our sins—when he had risen again for our justification—when he had shed forth on his disciples the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit—then were all the types fulfilled; *then was the law of types abolished*. “There is verily,” saith the apostle, “a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.”\* Again, “Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared *me*: in burnt-offerings and (sacrifices) for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt-offerings and (offering) for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. *He taketh away the first that he may establish the second.*”† The system of types and sacrificial ordinances, therefore, being

\* Heb. vii. 18, 19.

† Heb. x. 5—9.



“taken away,” and the spiritual system being, by the coming of Christ, established, we are no longer to worship the Father through the intervention of a human priesthood, of formal ceremonies, or of typical institutions, but *solely* through the mediation of the High Priest of our profession, and under the immediate and all-sufficient influences of the Holy Ghost. Although the shadows of the old law formed an essential part of the *Jewish* dispensation, they were no sooner imposed upon Christians than they became *unlawful*, and assumed the character of an unrighteous bondage and of “beggarly elements.” \* “Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world,” says the apostle Paul to his Colossian converts, “why, as though living in the world, *are ye subject to ordinances?*” †

Having thus endeavored to unfold the nature of that spiritual worship of God which the Lord Jesus enjoined on his followers, and to show how clearly it was distinguished from the old ceremonial worship practised among the Jews, I may now take up the more particular consideration of the rites of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. These rites have both received the name of “sacraments,” a word which properly signifies *oaths*, and formerly designated more especially the oaths of allegiance required of Roman soldiers; but which,

\* Gal. iv. 9.

† Col. ii. 20, comp. 14; Eph. ii. 14—16.

as applied to these religious ceremonies, may be considered as denoting "sacred and binding ordinances."

It is imagined by many persons that the ordinances thus held as sacred in the church, are but little connected with those Jewish institutions which are, on all hands, allowed to have been abolished by the coming and sacrifice of the Messiah; that they are, on the contrary, (with the single exception of the baptism of John) of an origin exclusively Christian. On the supposition of the correctness of this opinion, it is, nevertheless, undeniable, that these rites, as they are now observed, are of *precisely the same nature* as the ceremonies of the ancient Jews. They are actions indifferently in themselves, employed as religious forms, and as a constituent part of a system of divine worship; and, like those Jewish ceremonies, they are mere types or shadows, representing, in a figurative manner, certain great particulars of Christian truth. It is clear, therefore, that the *principle* on which these practices are founded, appertains to the old covenant; and equally plain (in the opinion of Friends) that such practices do not consist with that spiritual worship, which is described as so distinguishing a feature of the dispensation of the gospel.

Although, however, the rites of Baptism and the Supper have been so generally adopted, as belonging to their own religious system, by the professors of faith

in Jesus, I cannot consider it true, in any accurate sense of the terms, that they are of Christian origin. On the contrary, there is every reason to believe that, before the coming of Christ, these practices actually formed a part of the customary Jewish ritual.

First, with respect to *baptism in water*. It is notorious, that, according to the ceremonial law of the Jews, there could be no removal of uncleanness, no purification either of things or persons, without ablution in water. On various occasions the performance of that ceremony was appointed by the divine law: and, on many others, it was observed on the authority of Rabbinical tradition. Now, these “divers washings,” to which the Jews were so much accustomed as a ritual means of purification, are, in the Greek Testament, described as *baptisms*;\* and it is certain that the principal of them were effected by dipping or immersion. Before going into the temple to minister or officiate, the priests of the Jews were accustomed to dip their whole body in water, and the house in which this ceremony was performed was called “the house of baptism.”† Persons of every description, who had contracted any bodily pollution, were strictly enjoined by the law to wash or bathe their flesh;‡ and the learned Jews deter-

\* Heb. ix. 10; Mark vii. 4; Luke xi. 38.

† *Cod. Joma. cap. 3, quoted by Hammond on Matt. iii.*

‡ See Lev. xv. 5, 8, 11.

mine that, if the least part of the surface of the body was not wetted by the dipping, the purification was incomplete. In the Greek original of the book of Ecclesiasticus, a person purified, after touching a dead body, is described as one *dipped* or *baptized*.\* Judith, when on the point of performing an action which she erroneously deemed to be of a highly religious nature, “washed ( or, as in the Greek, baptized ) herself in a fountain of water.”† Now, although the baptism practised by John and by the apostles did not, in all its circumstances, resemble those Jewish washings to which I have now adverted, yet it was precisely similar to them in that main particular of immersion in water, and, in all these instances, this immersion was typical of one and the same thing—that is to say, of *a change from a condition of uncleanness to one of purity*. But the Jewish dipping, from which the baptism, first, of John, and afterwards, of the apostles, principally took its rise, and of which those baptisms may, indeed, be considered as mere instances, was the *dipping on conversion*. We read in the book of Exodus, that three days before the delivery of the law, “the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes ;” in pursuance of which command, we are afterwards informed that “Moses went down from the mount unto

\* Chap. xxxiv. 25.

† Chap. xii. 7.

the people, and sanctified the people; and they washed their clothes.”\* From the comparison of other similar passages, it appears probable that the washing of clothes here mentioned was a baptism or immersion in water of the whole body, together with the apparel.† Such is the express judgment of the Rabbinical writers, and they further declare that this baptism was commanded and observed, on the principle that the Israelites were then about to be introduced to a new religious covenant or dispensation—that, in other words, it was a *baptism of conversion*, to a purer and more excellent system of worship, faith, and conduct, than that to which they had hitherto been accustomed.‡

Hence, as it is declared by Maimonides and other Jewish writers, arose the baptism of proselytes, or of the Gentile converts to the religion of the Jews.§ It was a principle well understood among that people, that *as it was with the Israelite, so should it be with the*

\* Exod. xix. 10, 14.

† Compare Lev. xi. 25; xiv. 47; xv. 5, &c.

‡ Maimonides, *Issure Biah*, cap. 13. Lightfoot, *Hor. Heb. in Matt.* iii. 6.

§ The proselytes were of two descriptions: *proselytes of the gate*, who forsook idolatry and worshipped the true God, but did not conform to the Jewish law; and *proselytes of justice*, who went further, and embraced the whole legal and ceremonial system. It was the latter only who were baptized.



*proselyte*;\* and, accordingly, as the Israelites had entered into their covenant by “circumcision, baptism and sacrifice,” the same introductory rites were considered indispensable for every true convert to their religion.†

Maimonides, who was a man of extraordinary sense and learning, and was deeply versed in the laws and customs of the ancient Jews, has stated a variety of particulars respecting the baptism of proselytes. It appears that, about three days after circumcision, the

\* See Numb. xv. 15.

† According to the traditions of the Rabbins, circumcision, baptism, and sacrifice, were enjoined on every male, and the two latter on every female convert from heathenism to the Jewish faith. It was a trite axiom, as Lightfoot informs us, that no man could be a proselyte until he was circumcised and baptized. In the Babylonish Gemara (part of the Talmud) we find the following disputation: “The proselyte who is circumcised and not baptized, what are we to say of him? Rabbi Eliezer says, Behold he is a proselyte; for so we find it was with our fathers, (the patriarchs) that they were circumcised and not baptized. He that is baptized and not circumcised, what are we to say of him? Rabbi Joshua says, Behold, he is a proselyte; for so we find it is with females. But the wise men say, Is he baptized and not circumcised? or is he circumcised and not baptized? “*He is no proselyte until he be circumcised and baptized.*” *Jevamoth*, fol. 46, 2. *Lightfoot*, *Hor. Heb.* in *Matt.* iii. 6.

convert to Judaism was conducted, during the day-time, to a confluence of waters, whether natural or artificial, sufficiently deep to admit of entire immersion. Having been placed in the water, he was instructed in various particulars of the Jewish law, by three scribes of learning and authority, who presided over the whole ceremony; and, when these doctors had received his promises of a faithful adherence to the Jewish institutions, and had fully satisfied themselves respecting his motives and condition of mind, he completed the immersion of his whole person, by dipping his head. He then ascended from the water, offered his sacrifice to the Lord, and was thenceforward considered as a complete Jew, and as a new or regenerate man.\*

I am aware that the existence of the rite of proselyte baptism, before the Christian era, is disputed by some of the learned, on the ground that such a rite is not specifically mentioned either in the Old Testament, or in the most ancient uninspired writings of the Jews; but this omission is very far from being sufficient to prove the negative; and the doubt which it occasions appears to be greatly outbalanced by positive evidences in favor of the antiquity of the practice. It seems necessary shortly to glance at these evidences.

\* *Issure Biah*, cap. 13, 14. *Wall on Infant Baptism*, p. xliv.  
*Selden de Synedriss*, l.b. i. cap. 3.

1. The Jewish writers, who make mention of the baptism of proselytes, expressly describe it as an ordinance practised among their countrymen at a date long prior to the Christian era. Thus, it is said in the Talmud, that Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, was baptized as a proselyte.\* From Maimonides we learn that the baptism of proselytes was practised from age to age,† after the Israelites themselves had been admitted into their covenant in the days of Moses; and, again, he makes mention of the proselytes in the time of David and Solomon, as of persons *who had been baptized*.‡

2. There was a marked resemblance in several leading particulars between the baptism of proselytes, as described in the Talmud and by Maimonides, and the baptism practised by John and the early teachers of Christianity. 'The baptism of the proselytes was a complete immersion, and was appointed to take place in a *confluence of waters*. The baptism of John and of the Christians is generally allowed to have been of the same character. John baptized "in Ænon, near to Salim, because *there was much water there*;"§ and when the Ethiopian was to be baptized, we read that he and Philip went down or "*descended into the*

\* *Tract. Repudii, Hammond on Matt. ii.*

† לדורות

‡ *Issu e Biah, cap. 13.*

§ John iii. 23.



water," and afterwards that they "*came up out of the water.*" \* It has, indeed, been remarked that, as the proselyte dipped his own head, he might be considered as baptizing himself, whereas the convert to Christianity was baptized by some minister; and the disciples of John were baptized by that prophet. But the supposed difference in this respect is probably imaginary; for, although the proselyte plunged his own head in conclusion of the rite, he might properly be described as being baptized by the persons who placed him in the water, and who arranged the whole ceremony. Accordingly, I observe that the Jews speak of "*baptizing*" their proselytes, just as Christians make mention of "*baptizing*" their converts. † Again,—during the act of baptism, the proselyte was instructed, and made to stipulate for himself, by the scribes:‡ that the same circumstances now attend the rite of baptism, as practised among Christians, is well known; and that they have been, from very early times, the accompaniments

\* Acts viii. 38, 39.

† Even as they circumcise and baptize proselytes, so do they circumcise and baptize servants who are received from Gentiles, &c. *Maim., Issure Biah*, cap. 13. "When a proselyte is received, he must be circumcised; and when he is cured, they baptize him in the presence of two wise men," &c. *Talmud Babyl. Mass. Jevamoth*, fol. 47.

‡ *Seld. n de Syned.*, lib. 1, cap. iii. p. 785.

of that ceremony, is generally allowed.\* Again, when the proselyte was baptized, the rite was frequently administered, not only to himself, but to his family. So also it appears to have been with the early baptism of the Christians: we read, that Lydia was baptized *with her household*; that Paul baptized “the household of Stephanas;” and that, when the jailor at Philippi became convinced of the truth of Christianity, he and “all his” partook together of the same ceremony.† Again,—the proselyte, who had entered into covenant by circumcision, baptism, and sacrifice, was considered as a new man; or, to adopt the language of the Jews, as “a child new born;” and of this new birth, or introduction to a better and purer faith, *immersion in water was evidently used as the expressive sign*. So it is notorious, that the genuine convert to the faith of Christ is ever represented, in the New Testament, as one regenerate, or born again; and baptism, as employed by John and the apostles, was a figure of this regeneration. These points of resemblance between the Jewish proselyte baptism, and that of the Christians, are so important and so striking, as to render it nearly indisputable that the one baptism was borrowed from the other. Since, therefore, it is altogether in-

\* See *Macknight* and others on 1 Pet. iii. 21.

† Acts xvi. 15, 33; 1 Cor. i. 16. *Germara Babyl. Chetub.* cap. i. fol. 11, &c. *Wall*, p. xlix.

credible that the Jews should borrow one of their leading ceremonies from the Christians whom they despised and hated, there can be little reasonable doubt that the baptism of John and the Christians was derived from the proselyte baptism of the Jews; and that, of course the latter was of a date prior to Christianity.\*

3. Our Saviour's discourse with Nicodemus is considered (and I think with justice) to contain an allusion to the baptism of proselytes; for he there describes *conversion* under the figure of a second birth—a birth of “*water* and of the Spirit.” Here there is a precise accordance with the known Jewish doctrine respecting proselytism; and, after having thus treated of that doctrine, and applied it in a spiritual sense, our Lord adverts to the want of intelligence displayed by Nicodemus on the subject, as to a surprising circumstance: “*Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things?*”

4. Although the baptism of proselytes is no where expressly mentioned in the Old Testament, it was the natural, and indeed necessary consequence of the admitted principle of the Jewish law *that unclean persons of every description were to be purified by washing in water*, and of the custom which so generally pre-

\* *Gemara, Jevamot*<sup>h</sup>, cap. iv. fol. 62, 1. *Maim Issure Biah*, cap. 14; *Wall*, p. lvii.

vailed among the ancient Jews, of effecting this washing by immersion. On whatever occasion the rite of baptism was employed—whether as a preparation for religious service, or for the removal of uncleanness, or as a type of conversion to a holier faith—whether it was enjoined on the high priest, or on the leper, or on the proselyte from heathenism, or on the disciple of John, or on the convert of the apostles—it was, in all cases, a rite of purification. Thus we find, that the baptism of John excited a dispute between him and the Jews, on the subject of *purifying* :\* thus Paul was exhorted by Ananias to be baptized (or, as in the Greek, to baptize himself) and *to wash away his sins* :† and thus, in apparent allusion (although in a spiritual sense) to the rite of baptism, the same apostle describes his own converts, as *washed and sanctified*, ‡ &c. Now it is certain that, at the Christian era, the Jews considered the Gentiles to be unclean persons, so that they were not permitted to associate with them, or to eat in their company.§ Hence, therefore, it must have followed, as a matter of course, that no Gentile could become a Jew—could become clean himself, or fitted to unite with a clean people—*without undergoing the rite of baptism*.

\* John iii. 25.

† Acts xxii. 16.

‡ 1 Cor. vi. 11 : *comp.* Eph. v. 26, Heb. x. 22, &c.

§ See Acts x. 28 ; *comp.* John iv. 9, &c.

Such are the positive evidences and plain reasons which appear to prove, in a very satisfactory manner, the antiquity of the Jewish rite of *baptism on conversion*, and which confirm the opinion of Hammond, Selden, Lightfoot, Wall, and other learned writers, that this ceremony was perfectly familiar to the Jews, before the incarnation of our Lord. Accordingly, we may observe that, when John “baptized in the wilderness, and preached the baptism of repentance (or conversion for the remission of sins,” his doctrine was very far from being strange or surprising to his hearers; nor did they evince the least difficulty in submitting themselves to the ordinance. On the contrary, multitudes pressed around him for the purpose: “And there went out unto him,” says the evangelist, “all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.”\*

It was the office of the Baptist to proclaim the approach of that heavenly kingdom—that purer dispensation—for which the pious among the Jews were so anxiously looking: and the faith, into the profession of which he baptized, was faith in the coming Messiah, the long expected Ruler of restored and renovated Israel. “John, verily,” said Paul, “baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that

\* Mark i. 4, 5.



*they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.*"\* On the ground of his being either the Christ himself, or Elias, the expected forerunner of the Christ, no objection could be taken to his baptism by the Pharisees who came to dispute with him; for, in either of these characters, he would be the authorized minister of a new and purer faith, and, as a matter of course a baptizer. It was because of the declaration of John, that he was not the Christ—that he was not Elias—that he was not that prophet—and for that reason only, that the Pharisees address the question to him, "Why baptizest thou then?"†

And so it was also with the disciples of Jesus. As John baptized on conversion to a faith in the Messiah to come, so they baptized on conversion to a faith that Jesus was the Messiah. Both John and the apostles were engaged in the work of converting, in making disciples to a new system of faith and conduct, to a holier law, and to a more spiritual dispensation,—and, therefore, on a well known Jewish principle, and in conformity with a common Jewish practice, *they respectively baptized their converts in water.*

Secondly, with respect to the "Lord's Supper," I conceive that, as it was observed by primitive Christians, it could not justly be considered as a direct cere-

\* Acts xix. 4.

† John i. 25.

monial ordinance. But, upon the supposition that the apostles and their companions, like more modern Christians, were accustomed to practise it only as a religious rite, and as a part of their system of divine worship, such an institution must be regarded as immediately connected with the Jewish Passover. The lamb eaten at the Passover, and the bread broken and wine poured forth in the Christian Eucharist, were equally intended as types; and they were types of the same event—the death and sacrifice of Christ. The two ceremonies, therefore, may be looked upon as the same in point of principle. But, it is more especially to our present purpose to remark, that the breaking of the bread, and the pouring forth of the wine, together with the blessing and giving of thanks, which distinguish the ceremony of the Eucharist, actually formed a part of the ritual order, to which the ancient Jews were accustomed, in celebrating the supper of the Passover. This fact is sufficiently evident, from the narrations contained in the Gospels, of our Lord's last paschal meal with his disciples; and is fully substantiated on the authority of the Rabbinical writers, who in their minute statements respecting the right method of conducting that ceremonial Jewish supper, have explicitly directed the observance of all these particulars.\*

\* See *Extracts from the Talmud and Maimonides, in Lightfoot. Hor. Heb. in Matt. xxiv.*

Before we draw a conclusion from the facts now stated, it may be desirable briefly to review the former part of the argument. In explaining that great law of the new covenant, that God who is a Spirit, must be worshipped in spirit and in truth, we have adverted to the comparison so evidently instituted by Jesus Christ, when he pronounced the law in question, between the spiritual and substantial worship thus enjoined on his own followers, and that which was customary among the ancient Samaritans and Jews. The two systems of worship are described as completely distinct; the one was about to die away, the other to be established. The old worship consisted principally in the performance of typical rites. The new worship was of a precisely opposite character. The ordinance was to cease; the shadow was to be discontinued; the substance was to be enjoyed; and, in the total disuse of ancient ceremonial ordinances, communion was now to take place between the Father and the souls of his people, only through the mediation of Jesus Christ, and under the direct influences of the Spirit of truth. On the supposition, therefore, that water-baptism and the Eucharist were not of Jewish origin, yet, being shadows and types, and nothing more, they perfectly resemble the ordinances of the law, and plainly appertain to the principle of the old covenant. But, further—on a fair examination of the history of these ceremonies, we find,



that they not only belong to the principle of the old covenant, but were practices observed on that principle by the Jews themselves, before the introduction of the Christian revelation. Thus, then, it appears that they actually formed a part of the ritual system of Judaism itself; and, since it is, on all hands, allowed that the whole of that ritual system, although observed for many years after the death of Jesus by most of his immediate disciples, is nevertheless null and void under the Christian dispensation, we appear to be brought to a sound conclusion that in connexion with the worship of Christians, *the ceremonies in question are rightly disused.*

It will scarcely be denied by any persons who are awakened to a sense of the spirituality of true religion, that in this view of the subject there is much which is reasonable, and consistent with the leading characteristics of Christianity. But, on the other hand, it is pleaded that the New Testament contains certain passages, in which the practice of these rites is not only justified, but enforced; and which, in fact, render such practice binding upon all the followers of Christ.

In order to form a sound judgment whether this notion is correct or erroneous, it will be necessary for us to enter into a somewhat detailed examination of the passages in question, and of several others in which baptism and the dominical supper are either alluded to, or directly mentioned. Previously, however, to

entering on such an examination, I may venture upon one general observation; namely, that if any such passages be found fairly to admit of either a literal or a spiritual interpretation, and if it be allowed (as I think it must be, for the general reasons already stated) that the later is far more in harmony than the former with the nature of the Christian dispensation—in such case, we are justified, by the soundest laws of biblical criticism, in adopting the spiritual, and in dropping the literal interpretation.

We may commence with *Baptism*.

The first passage to be considered, in reference to this subject, is that in which the apostle John has described our Lord's conversation with Nicodemus, on the doctrine of regeneration. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." . . . . . "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born *of water and of the Spirit*, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." \* I cannot deny that, when our Lord thus spake of being born of water, his words contained an *allusion* to the rite of purification. It has been already remarked, that the doctrine on which he thus insisted, in a spiritual sense, and respecting which he adverted so pointedly to the ignorance of Nicodemus, was one which,

\* John iii. 3—5.

in its merely external bearings, was perfectly familiar to the Jews. The proselyte, who had forsaken heathenism, and adopted the Jewish religion, was considered as one *new-born*; and of this new birth his immersion in water appears to have been the appointed sign. The new birth of the true Christian—that indispensable preparation for his entrance into the kingdom—is therefore fitly illustrated by the circumstances of the baptized proselyte. But, though it is sufficiently evident that our Lord alluded, in this passage, to the Jewish rite of baptism on conversion, it appears to be equally clear that he made that allusion in a merely figurative and spiritual sense. Those who would prove, that to “be born of water” in this passage, literally signifies to be *outwardly baptized*, defeat their own purposes by attempting to prove too much. If the *possibility* of an entrance into the kingdom of heaven, which a multitude of moral sins does not preclude, is precluded by the infraction of a merely positive precept, and by the omission of a rite *in itself* indifferent, it may almost be asserted that the system of Christianity is overturned, and that the gospel falls to the ground. To impose on an obscure and ambiguous expression a sense which thus contradicts so many general declarations made by the sacred writers, and which is directly opposed to the fundamental doctrines of the New Testament, is obviously very inconsistent

with the laws of a just and comprehensive criticism. Nothing, one would think, but absolute necessity, would compel any reasonable critic to the adoption of such an alternative.

But, in point of fact, the expressions thus employed by Jesus are capable of being otherwise interpreted with the greatest propriety. Numerous passages might be adduced, from both the Old and New Testament, in which the carnal washings or baptisms of the Jews are alluded to in a merely spiritual sense, and in which, more particularly, we find the grace of the Spirit—that sacred influence given to men for their conversion and sanctification—described under the figure of “water.” \* According, therefore, to this known scriptural phraseology, “to be born of water,” may be properly understood as signifying *to be converted, cleansed, and introduced to newness of life by the Spirit of God*. Such is the interpretation of these words, which is adopted not only by Friends, but by various pious writers and commentators on Scripture, who have no connexion with that Society. † This interpretation is by no means precluded by the addition—“*and of the Spirit:*” for our Lord’s words may

\* See Ps. li. 2, 7; Isa. i. 16; Jer. iv. 14; Ezek. xxxvi. 25; John iv. 10; vii. 38; 1 Cor. vi. 11; Eph. v. 26.

† See *Scott, A. Clark, Gill, &c.*

here be understood, not as relating to two things, but as representing one thing, first by means of a figure, and afterwards without that figure. Such a mode of expression is not unusual in the sacred writings. Just in the same manner the apostle Paul describes his own converts, first as "*washed*," and immediately afterwards as "*sanctified*," by the Spirit of God; \* and when John the Baptist declared that Jesus, who was coming after him, should "baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire," he probably employed *both* those terms to represent *one* internal and purifying influence.

That spiritual interpretation of our Lord's expressions which is thus plainly admissible, is moreover confirmed by the immediate context. Jesus says to Nicodemus, (according to the common English version), "Except a man be born *again*, he cannot see the kingdom of God;" and again he says, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." It is obvious that the latter of these sayings is nothing more than an *explanatory repetition* of the former, and that, in point of meaning, they are to be regarded as equivalent. Now from the comparison of the other passages in the writings of this apostle, in which the same adverb is used, it appears that the term rendered *born again*,

\* 1 Cor. vi. 11.



although denoting that birth which was in fact a second one, ought rather to be rendered “born *from above*.” \* It follows, therefore, that to be “born from above,” and “to be born of water and the Spirit,” are expressions which have the same meaning. But “*to be born from above*” can surely signify nothing less than to undergo that true regeneration—that real change of heart—which is indeed “from above” because it is effected only by the Spirit and power of the Almighty. Again, after speaking of this heavenly birth “of water and the Spirit,” our Lord immediately drops his figurative allusion to water, and contrasts the *moral* change, of which alone he is speaking, with the birth of the flesh; “That which is born of the flesh is flesh: and *that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit.*” †

When the apostle Paul described the Corinthian Christians as persons who were “*washed*,” “sanctified, and justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God;” and when, on another occasion, he made mention of the whole church as sanctified and cleansed “with the washing of water by the word;” ‡ he probably derived his figurative language from the well-known Jewish custom of purification by water; and yet the impartial critic will scarcely deny

\* John iii. 3, 31; xix. 11, 23; *comp.* Matt. xxvii. 51; Mark xv. 38; James i. 17; iii. 15-17. So *Schleusner in Lex.*

† John iii. 6.

‡ Eph. v. 26.

that the doctrine which he couched under that language related *solely* to the operations of divine grace. The same remark applies to another passage in the writings of this apostle, which, while it plainly illustrates our Lord's doctrine respecting a birth "of water and of the Spirit," affords additional information on the subject of true Christian baptism. "For we ourselves also," says the apostle to Titus, "were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But, after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, *not by works of righteousness which we have done*, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the *washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost*, which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour." \* Where is the enlightened Christian who will refuse to allow that, under these expressions, the apostle is promulgating a doctrine entirely spiritual? The "washing of regeneration" which is here distinguished from all our own works of righteousness, attributed solely to the merciful interposition of God our Saviour, and described as a *divine operation*, effectual for the salvation of souls, can surely be nothing else than the baptism of the Spirit, or, to adopt the

apostle's own words of added explanation,—“*the renewing of the Holy Ghost.*”

Another passage, of similar import, is found in the epistle to the Hebrews, which I deem to be rightly ascribed to the same inspired author. Having, therefore, boldness,” says the apostle, “to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having a High Priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies *washed with pure water.*” \* The “pure water” mentioned in this passage is explained by some critics as signifying the water of an outward baptism; but a little examination may serve to convince the candid inquirer that such an interpretation is inconsistent with the whole scope of the apostle's argument. Every one who attentively peruses the ninth and tenth chapters of this admirable epistle, will observe that Paul is there unfolding the great doctrines of the Christian dispensation, as they were prefigured by the circumstances of the Jewish ceremonial law. The ritual appointed to be observed on the great day of atonement, as described in Lev. xvi., is that part of the Jewish institution to which he

\* Chap. x. 19—22.



is particularly adverting. On that day, the high priest was accustomed to enter into the holy of holies, or inner sanctuary of the temple, after a careful washing or bathing of his own body. After this purification he offered up a bullock and a goat, as an atonement for sin, and sprinkled the blood of the victims on the mercy-seat and on the altar. These and similar ceremonies (among which he particularly mentions "divers baptisms") are treated of by the apostles as denoting the spiritual realities of the new covenant; and when he proceeds to describe those realities, it is from the ordinances of Judaism that he borrows his figures. As the mercy-seat and the altar on the great day of atonement, and the people themselves on other occasions, were sprinkled with the blood of bulls and of goats, so are the hearts of Christians to be sprinkled from an evil conscience with the blood of Christ; and as the flesh of the priest, of the unclean person, or of the proselyte, was bathed in pure water, so is the natural man to be cleansed and renewed by the purifying influence of the Holy Ghost. The "sprinkling of the heart" and the "washing of the body" are expressions equally metaphorical. The one denotes our deliverance from guilt; the other our purification from sin. The one is the application of the sacrifice of Christ; the other is the baptism of his Spirit.\*

\* So *Calvin, Gill, and other commentators.*

Such are the passages in the New Testament which contain indirect allusions to purification by water, and in which the circumstances of that rite are figuratively adverted to, in descriptions relating *exclusively* to the work of grace. We may now proceed to consider certain other passages of the same general import, in which the verb “baptize,” or the substantive “baptism,” are actually introduced. In the passages already cited, the baptism of the Spirit is represented by its characteristic circumstances. In those to which I am now about to invite the reader’s attention, it is called by its name ; it is described as a *baptism*.

The first passages to be adduced, of this description, are those which contain the declarations of John, the forerunner of Jesus, respecting the baptism of the Messiah, as contrasted with his own ; one of these declarations is recorded by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and the other by the apostle John. “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance,” cried the Baptist to the Pharisees and Sadducees, and to the whole multitude by whom he was surrounded ; \* “but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear : *he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire* : whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his

\* *Comp.* Luke iii. 16.

wheat into the garner ; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” \* Luke has recited the Baptist’s declaration, in nearly the same words ; † and Mark records it simply as follows : “ John preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose. I indeed have baptized you with water ; but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.” ‡ The manner in which *the baptism with fire*, mentioned in Matt. iii. 11, and Luke iii. 16, is introduced to notice, in immediate connexion with that of the Holy Ghost, affords strong reason to believe that it represents the enlightening, cleansing, refining operation of the Spirit upon the hearts of men. *One* thing is described, as Grotius observed on Matt. iii. 11, by two different modes of expression—an observation which derives confirmation from Mark i. 8, in which passage the baptism ascribed to Christ, is only that “ with the Holy Ghost.” § The other declaration made by the

\* Matt. iii. 11, 12. † Chap. iii. 16, 17. ‡ Chap. i. 7, 8.

§ Such is the view taken of the “ fiery baptism ” here mentioned by many learned and able critics: for example, Munster, Erasmus, Vatablus, Clarius, Lud. Cappellus, and Calvin. Grotius I have already mentioned: see *Critic. Sacr. in loc.* An excellent exposition of Matt. iii. 11, will be found in the well-known and justly valued commentaries of the late Thomas Scott.

Baptist to the same effect, is related by the apostle John, as follows: "And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he *which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost*. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God." \* Such is the contrast drawn by John between his own baptism and that of Christ. The one is with water, merely external; the other is with the Spirit and fire, internal and powerful. The one is the work of man, and, like the minister who practised it, is "of the earth, *earthly*;" the other is *divine*, the work of the Son of God, who came from heaven, and "is above all." †

A precisely similar comparison was afterwards made by our Saviour himself. When he was on the point of quitting this lower world, the sphere of his humiliation, and was about to shed forth upon his disciples, in freshness and abundance, the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, he commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait there for the "promise of the Father;" for "John truly," said he, "*baptized with water* ; but ye shall be *baptized with the Holy Ghost* not

\* Chap. i. 32—34.

† John iii. 31.

many days hence.”\* Although the immediate disciples of Christ were endowed with a very unusual measure of the divine influence, it is always to be remembered that the promise of the Father was to all, in every age, who should truly believe in Jesus: † we may conclude, therefore, that all, in every age, who should believe in Jesus, were to receive, as well as the apostles themselves, the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Such, it is expressly declared, was the case with Cornelius and his family; ‡ and such, undoubtedly, must be the case with every Christian, whether more or less *gifted*, who is converted and sanctified by the influence of divine *grace*. Now, the general doctrine to be deduced from the declarations thus made both by the Baptist and by our Saviour, may be explicitly stated in a few words. It is, first, that the baptism which properly belonged to the dispensation of John, and which *distinguished it from Christianity*, was the *baptism with water*; and secondly, that the baptism which properly belongs to Christianity, and which distinguishes it from the dispensation of John, is the *baptism of the Spirit*.

The baptism of the Spirit is expressly mentioned by the apostle Paul. When describing the union which subsists among all the living members of the church

\* Acts i. 5.      † Acts ii. 39.      ‡ Acts xi. 15, 16.



of Christ, he writes as follows :—" For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body ; so also is Christ. *For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body*, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free ; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." \* Baptism with water, as adopted among the early Christians, was nothing more than a sign of that conversion which introduced into the church of Christ. The baptism of the Spirit, here mentioned by the apostle, is that powerful and divine operation, which really effects such an introduction, and by which, therefore, all the believers in Christ are brought together and united as fellow-members of the same body.

Since this apostle has so frequently alluded to the work of the Spirit on the heart, *under the figure of washing in water* ; † and since, in the passage now cited, he has plainly used the verb *baptize* in reference solely to that internal work, we are fully warranted in attributing to him a similar meaning on other occasions, when he makes use of the same verb, or its derivative substantive, in a manner somewhat less precise and defined. The examples to which I allude are

\* 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13.

† As in 1 Cor. vi. 11 ; Eph. v. 26 ; Tit. iii. 5 ; Heb. x. 22.



as follows:—"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him *by baptism* into death: that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." \* "In whom (that is, in Christ) ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: buried with him *in baptism*, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God who hath raised him from the dead." † "For as many of you as *have been baptized into Christ* have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." ‡ That we are correct in the spiritual interpretation of these passages, they will severally be found, on examination, to afford a strong internal evidence. In Rom. vi. 4, baptism appears to be described as the *efficacious means* of our dying to sin and of our walking in newness of life. In Col. ii. 11, 12, to be buried with Christ by baptism, and to rise with him therein, are mentioned in immediate connexion, and apparently represented as the same with being spirit-

\* Rom. vi. 3, 4.

† Col. ii. 11, 12.

‡ Gal. iii. 27, 28: *comp.* 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13.

ually circumcised *in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh*; and it is moreover declared that the good effects of this baptism—this purifying influence—are produced in us by the *faith of the operation of God*. In Gal. iii. 27, those only are described as baptized into Christ, who have actually “*put on Christ*,” \* or who, in other words, are clothed with his righteousness, and are truly made one in him. Now, all these descriptions apply with the greatest accuracy to that baptism of the Spirit, to which Paul in other parts of his epistles has so frequently adverted; and they are as completely inapplicable to the outward rite of immersion in water. On a general view, therefore, of the passages in which the apostle makes any doctrinal allusion to this subject, we may fairly conclude that the only baptism of importance, in his view, was that of the Spirit; and that it was only to this inward work that he intended to direct the attention of his readers, when he expressed himself as follows:—“There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, ONE BAPTISM.” †

\* *Comp.* Rom. xiii. 14; Eph. iv. 24.

† Eph. iv. 4, 5. There is one Lord, even Jesus Christ; one faith, even that of which *he* is the object; one baptism, even that of which *he* is the author; *comp.* Matt. iii. 11, 12.

A very lucid declaration on the same subject may be found in the writings of the apostle Peter. After adverting to the events which happened in the days of Noah—"while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water"—that apostle continues, "*The like figure whereunto, even baptism,* doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."\* The common English version of the first part of this verse is calculated to produce an erroneous impression of the apostle's meaning. There is nothing in the original Greek which conveys the idea that Christian baptism is a "*figure*." The word rendered "the like *figure*" signifies, as is justly remarked by Schleusner, nothing more than that which is *similar* or *corresponding*. So Archbishop Newcome renders the apostle's words, "*And what answereth to this (even) baptism doth now save us.*" I apprehend, however, that the Greek would be still more accurately rendered, "*A corresponding baptism whereunto doth now save us.*"† We are informed by the apostle Paul that the Israelites, who were led by the cloud, and passed through the sea, "*were all baptized unto Moses in the*

\* 1 Pet. iii. 21.

† ὧ καὶ ἡμᾶς ἀντίτυπον νῦν σώζει βάπτισμα.

cloud and in the sea.” \* On a similar principle, I conceive Peter to insinuate that Noah and his family, who were saved in the ark “by water,” underwent a baptism of their own. By that baptism their natural lives were saved; and Christians enjoy a *corresponding* baptism which effects the salvation of their immortal souls. After drawing this comparison between the baptism of Noah, by which the life of the body was preserved, and the baptism of Christians, by which eternal life is secured for the soul, the apostle proceeds still further to determine his meaning by adding a definition, first, of that which this saving Christian baptism *is not*, and secondly, of that which *it is*. Accordingly, he informs us that it *is not* the putting away of the filth of the flesh—or, in other words, not the washing of the body in water; and that it *is* the answer of a good conscience towards God. Now this answer of a good conscience is the result of a moral change, of a real *regeneration*. This is the baptism which the apostle here describes as distinguishing Christianity, and as saving the soul of the believer. Nor is it, like the baptism of water, the work of *man*. Peter expressly informs us that it is “by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.” It is effected by the power of that Saviour who is risen from the dead—“who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels

\* 1 Cor. x. 2.

and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.”\*

\* \* \* It is a satisfactory circumstance when we find persons who are wholly unconnected with Friends, and have probably but little knowledge either of the habits or principles of our Society, imbibing a truly spiritual view of Christian baptism. It has been my lot to meet with a few remarkable instances of this description in ministers of the Church of England; and a public example of the same kind is afforded us by Thomas Stratten, of Sunderland, the enlightened author of the “*Book of the Priesthood*.” This author appears to have no hesitation in adopting a spiritual interpretation of many of the passages which have now been cited from the epistles of Paul and Peter, on the subject of Baptism. “The minister of the gospel,” says he, “may baptize with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; but it is Christ’s own prerogative, which he exercises in answer to the prayer of those who call upon him, to baptize with the Holy Ghost *into his death*, that being buried with him, by baptism, into death, we may also like him be raised up from the dead, to walk in newness of life:” see Rom. vi. 3, 4. *Book of Priesthood*, p. 198.

The following passage, on the same subject, is very luminous: “We have found, in a quotation from the apostle Paul, a distinction made between the circumcision which was outward in the flesh, and that which was inward in the heart: we have also noticed evident indications of a corresponding distinction in the case of baptism, the visible application of water by the hand of man, and the invisible communication of the Holy Spirit’s grace from the hand of the exalted Redeemer. The



With the exception of Mark xvi. 16, (a text presently to be cited,) I believe we have now examined the *whole* of the passages in the New Testament which

passage in which this distinction is most specifically made, and by which this part of our subject is brought into close connexion with the work of our atoning and interceding Priest, has yet to be adduced. The waters of the deluge once saved the feeble remnant of the righteous, sweeping away in their flood the hosts of the ungodly, by which they were encompassed, and raising them to a new life of security and separation from the wicked, in the ark into which they had retired. ‘The like figure,’ (says Peter) ‘whereunto even baptism doth also now save us, *not* the putting away of the filth of the flesh,’ (that is, the outward affusion of water upon the flesh,) ‘but the answer of a good conscience toward God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God.’\* The nature of that answer, and consequently of the baptism to which Peter refers, Paul illustrates, when surveying the marshalled legions of the Christian’s foes, he defies the power of the whole, and triumphantly declares the ground on which security is enjoyed: ‘Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.’† The heart is sprinkled from an evil conscience, that is, a conscience uneasy and disturbed by

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\* 1 Pet. iii. 21, 22.

† Rom. viii. 33, 34.



contain any *doctrinal* statement on the subject of baptism. Now, the reader will probably recollect that, in the epistle to the Hebrews, which contains so noble an exposition of the spirituality of the Christian religion, the “doctrine of baptisms” is mentioned as one of those rudiments of truth, which were familiar even to the babes in Christ.\* Of the nature and principal features of that doctrine, the information of which we are in possession respecting the old baptisms of the Jews, together with the several passages of the New Testament which have now been considered, will enable us to form a sound and satisfactory estimate. Judging from the documents before me, I should say that this well-known “doctrine of baptisms” must have been nearly as follows. That, under the legal dispensation, “divers carnal baptisms” were observed by the Jews as rites of purification;† that among those

a sense of its guilt before God, by the application of the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than that of Abel. The answer of such a conscience is: I am safe, not because I have kept my baptismal vow, (for that no individual, who, either by his own lips, or by the lips of others appointed for him, has come under the obligation of a vow, has ever perfectly performed;) but I am safe, because Jesus died for my sins, and rose again for my justification; because I have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope which is set before me in the gospel;

\* Heb. v. 13, 14; vi. 2.

† Heb. ix. 10.

rites was numbered the baptism on conversion, a ceremony to which the Israelites themselves submitted on their original entrance into the covenant of the law;\* and which was afterwards invariably practised in the admission of the proselytes of justice to the character and privileges of the native Jew;† that, under divine authority, this baptism on conversion was applied by John to the peculiar purposes of his own ministry;‡ because I am baptized by the power of his Spirit, applying to my conscience the blood which cleanseth from all sin.

“This is the baptism, which, like the circumcision of the heart, rises so far in importance above ritual observances, that they may not with propriety be compared with it. Of the baptism which is administered by the hand of man, when compared with this, we may say, as the apostle did of circumcision, Neither is *that baptism* which is outward on the flesh. Whatever instruction and encouragement may be afforded by its administration, it has in it no inherent efficacy; it conveys no grace, it is not essential to salvation. The things which accompany salvation work, ‘that one and the self-same Spirit.’ ‘For by one Spirit, we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have all been made to drink into one spirit.’\* And this passage clearly and closely connects the subject with the interesting summary of essentials, which is given in another epistle written by the same apostle;

\* Exod. xix. 14. † John iii. 5, 10. ‡ John i. 32-34.

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\* 1 Cor. xii. 13.

that these ancient Jewish baptisms were severally effected by washing or immersion in water; that they were all figures of another and a better baptism, by which Christianity was distinguished from every preparatory dispensation—a baptism of which Christ is the author, and his disciples, in every age and country, the objects; that this true Christian baptism is applied not to the body, but to the soul, and is effected entirely by the power of the Holy Ghost; that by it we are regenerated or converted, sanctified and saved from sin; and, finally, that without it no man can find an entrance into the mansions of eternal glory.

We cannot fail to observe, that the “doctrine of baptisms,” as it is thus unfolded on the authority of Scripture, perfectly consists with that great principle of the divine law, to which, in the preceding part of this chapter, we have so particularly adverted; namely that redeeming it from hands employed in ceremonies of human invention, by which it has been confused, perverted, and debased, and presenting it in harmony with the vital principles of the gospel, which it has been our endeavor to unfold and establish. ‘There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, *one baptism*,’ (by the one Spirit into the one body,) ‘one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.’ \* p. 205—208.

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\* Eph. iv. 4—6.

under the last or Christian dispensation, God is no longer to be worshipped through the old medium of ceremonies, shadows, and types, but *in spirit and in truth*.

We may now proceed to consider another passage of the New Testament, in which it is very generally imagined that the practice of water-baptism is instituted as a Christian ordinance, and enjoined on the ministers of Christ. Matthew concludes his Gospel with the following narration of our Lord's last address to his eleven apostles: "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, (or, as in the Greek, "Going therefore, make disciples of all nations,") *baptizing them in* (or rather "into") *the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."\*

That persons who have long been accustomed to regard water-baptism as sacred, should understand this passage as relating to it, is a circumstance which need not surprise us. Nevertheless, it ought to be observed that there is no mention made in the passage of water, or any thing whatsoever in the terms used, which ren-

\* Matt. xxviii. 18—20.

ders such literal interpretation imperative upon us. On the contrary, I am persuaded that an impartial consideration of the collateral points which throw light on the true meaning of our Lord's injunction, will lead us to a very different view of that meaning.

Jesus commands his apostles to make disciples of all nations; and, in executing that high commission, it was to be their duty, as we learn from his subsequent words, to baptize the persons whom they taught, *into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*. Now, the peculiar solemnity of that parting moment, and the apparent improbability that, on such an occasion, a merely external ceremony should be so prominently brought forward—the method so often employed by Jesus, of conveying instruction and precept, concerning spiritual things, in words which bore an outward allusion to the flesh\*—the frequent occurrence of the terms “baptize” and “baptism” in the New Testament, and particularly in the discourses of Christ himself, in a sense purely metaphorical—the abolition, under the new dispensation, of the whole Jewish ritual, and the substitution of a spiritual worship—the evidence derived from so many other explicit passages of Scripture, in favor of the doctrine that the baptism of Christianity is the work of the Spirit only

\* See, for example, John iv. 14, 32; vii. 28.



—the pointed manner in which Jesus himself, in a preceding part, as is most probable, of this very conversation, contrasted that powerful influence, which was the privilege of his own followers, with the water-baptism of John,\*—all these are collateral circumstances which bear, with no slight degree of force, on the passage before us, and which, when considered as a whole, appear to afford substantial evidence that the baptism here referred to by the Redeemer of men, was simply a *spiritual baptism*.

It is, indeed, true that the baptism of the Spirit is elsewhere attributed to Christ himself. Undoubtedly it is a divine work; but, originating, as it ever must do, with our divine Master, this baptism might nevertheless be administered by the instrumentality of his servants. In as much as the apostles of Jesus Christ were enabled, through the efficacy of an inspired ministry, to turn away their hearers from idolatry and other sins, to introduce them to a state of comparative purity, and to convert them to the true faith; in so much did they possess the power to baptize, in a spiritual sense, into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. It appears to be on the same principle that Christ is described by the apostle Paul as applying to his own church the baptism of the

\* Acts i. 5.



Spirit—as sanctifying and cleansing it “with the washing of water”—“*by the word,*” \* that is, probably, by the ministry of the Gospel. † “The preaching of the cross,” when prompted and dictated by the Holy Spirit is often found to be “the power of God.” ‡ The ministers of the Gospel ought, however, always to remember that they can administer the baptism of the Spirit only through the power of their Lord and Saviour; and, in their humble efforts to perform so sacred a duty, they must derive their encouragement from that gracious promise—“*Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.*”

Upon the present point it only remains to be observed, that the observations now offered on Matthew xxviii. 19, 20, will be found to derive material support from the parallel passage in the Gospel of Mark; “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved,*” &c. § Here the baptism, to which our Lord is described as adverting, is classed with that faith which is essential to our salvation. *It is the baptism which*

\* The expression in the original Greek is not *λόγος*, which sometimes signifies the essential Word of God, and is applied as a title to the Son himself, but *ῥήμα*.

† Eph. v. 26; comp. Rom. x. 17.      ‡ 1 Cor. i. 18.

§ Mark xvi. 15, 16.

*saves*. Now, we are assured that the baptism which saves is “not the putting away of the filth of the flesh” or any work of righteousness which we can perform for ourselves;\* it is that birth of water and the Spirit, which is “from above,” and which prepares us for an entrance into the kingdom of heaven;† it is “the answer of a good conscience toward God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ;”‡ it is “the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.”§

On a review of the various passages cited in the present chapter, my readers will probably agree with me in the sentiment, that there is no part of the New Testament, in which the observance of baptism in water is either *commanded or declared to be necessary*. Such being the case, I know of nothing which remains to be pleaded in support of that ceremony as a part of the religious service of Christians, but the example of the apostles. That many of the apostles were accustomed, both before and after the ascension of Jesus, to baptize their converts in water, is indeed rendered indisputable by certain passages in the Gospel of John and in the book of Acts. But this fact by no means affords any sufficient evidence that the practice of a similar rite is universally imperative on the ministers of Christianity. The spirituality of the new dispensa-

\* Tit. iii. 5.    † John iii. 5.    ‡ 1 Pet. iii. 21.    § Tit. iii. 5.

tion—the great principle, that God was no longer to be served by the intervention of sacerdotal and typical institutions, but only through the mediation of the Son and under the influence of the Holy Spirit, was very gradually unfolded to these servants of the Lord. It is notorious that many of them adhered with strictness to a great part of the Jewish ritual, long after it was abrogated by the death of Christ; and, even on the Gentile converts, they enjoined an abstinence from things strangled and from blood, (that is from the blood of animals,) no less imperatively than from the sin of fornication.\* It is true that, after they had ceased to recommend circumcision to the Gentiles, they continued to baptize them in water. But the reason of this distinction is plain: namely, that circumcision was the sign of an entrance into the covenant of the law, but that baptism, although a Jewish practice, and observed on the principles of Judaism, was the type of conversion to Christianity itself, and was therefore, very naturally considered by the apostles as appropriate to the specific purposes of their own ministry. As long as they observed the ceremonies of Judaism in their own persons; as long as they continued unprepared for a full reception of the doctrine, that the ordinances and shadows of the law were now to be dis-

\* Acts xv. 29.

used, and that God was to be worshipped spiritually ; so long would they, as a matter of course, persevere in the practice of baptizing their converts in water. Neither are we to imagine that, in this respect, the apostles acted in opposition to the will of their divine Master, who appears to have imposed upon them no sudden change of conduct respecting ritual observances but simply to have left them in possession of those great principles of spiritual religion, the tendency of which was to undermine these practices at the foundation, and thus, in a gradual manner, to effect their abolition.

But there is another reason why the example of the earliest Christian teachers affords no valid evidence, that the practice of water-baptism is still incumbent on the ministers of the gospel of Christ—namely, that this example is not uniform. Its uniformity is known to have been interrupted by two exceptions of peculiar weight and importance. The exception which I shall first notice is that of the apostle Paul. That eminent individual—who was not “a whit behind the chiefest apostles,” and who had formerly been a “Pharisee of the Pharisees,” and a zealot in the support of the Jewish law—when he was once converted to the Christian faith, was the first to throw off the bondage of that law and he presently excelled his brethren in his views of the spirituality of the gospel dispensation. According-

ly, we find that baptism with water was, in his judgment, by no means indispensable, or inseparably connected with the duties of a Christian minister. Although it is probable that his converts were generally baptized in water, a large proportion of them received no such baptism at the hands of the apostle. He expressly asserts that, among the whole multitude of the Corinthians who had been converted by his ministry, he baptized *none* save Crispus and Gaius, and the household of Stephanas.\* It is not, however, merely the apostle's personal abstinence from the use of the rite which claims our attention in reference to the present argument: it is rather the ground and principle on which he declares that he abstained from it. The practice of this ceremony in the Christian church is supported chiefly by the generally received opinion that Christ commanded his apostles, when they made disciples of all nations, to baptize them with water; and that from the apostles this duty has descended to all rightly-authorized ministers who, like them, are engaged in the promulgation of Christian truth. But Paul, highly favored as he was as a minister of the gospel, and engaged far more extensively than any of his brethren in the work of making disciples of all nations, abstained, to a very great extent, from the act

\* 1 Cor. i. 14—16.



of baptizing with water; and for this express reason—*that he had received no commission to perform it*.—"For Christ," said he, "sent me not to baptize but to preach the gospel."\*

The other exception alluded to, is one of still greater moment: it is that of the divine Founder of our religion. The Lord Jesus Christ rendered, in his own person, a complete obedience to all righteousness, as it was observed under the law; and therefore he submitted to the baptism of John. But his own converts, who belonged to that spiritual institution which he so frequently denominates the "kingdom of heaven,"† he *baptized not*. Although he permitted his disciples to practise that ceremony, he abstained from it himself. This fact is noticed by the apostle John, who, after stating that "the Pharisees heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John," carefully adds, (for the prevention of error, no doubt, on so interesting a subject,) "though (or howbeit) *Jesus himself baptized not*, but his disciples."‡ Those preachers of the gospel therefore, who consider it their duty, in conformity with the great fundamental law of Christian worship, to abstain from the practice of baptizing their converts in water, have the consolation to know that, in adopting such a line of conduct, they are following the example of Him who afforded us a perfect pattern.

\* Ver. 17.      † See Matt. xi. 11, &c.      ‡ John iv. 1, 2.



Since, therefore, water-baptism was a Jewish ceremonial or typical observance ; since, under the new dispensation, the plan of divine worship is changed, and all such observances are, by a general law, abolished ; since, in precise conformity with that law, “the doctrine of baptisms,” as unfolded in various passages of the New Testament, appears to attribute to Christianity *only* the baptism of the Spirit ; since that particular passage in which the outward rite is supposed to be enjoined upon Christians may, with the truest critical propriety, be otherwise explained : and since the example of the first preachers of Christianity, in favour of that ceremony, arose out of peculiar circumstances, and was interrupted by two overpowering exceptions—I cannot but deem it undeniable that Friends are fully justified in their disuse of water-baptism.

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I may now proceed to the consideration of those parts of the New Testament which relate to the practice called the *Lord's Supper*.

In order to clear our ground respecting its nature and character, it is desirable, in the first place, to direct our attention to the tenth chapter of the First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians—a chapter which

contains a remarkable allusion to the Lord's Supper, as it was observed by the early Christians. It appears that some of the Corinthian converts had so far sacrificed their religious consistency, as to join the banquets of their heathen neighbours, and to feast with them upon meats which had been previously offered to idols. Such was the unchristian practice which suggested to the apostle Paul the following reproof and exhortation: "I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say. The cup of blessing which we bless, (or for which we give thanks,) is it not a *joint participation* (*Eng. Trans.* "the communion") of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a *joint participation* (*Eng. Trans.* "the communion") of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one (or that same) bread. Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices (*joint*) *partakers* of the altar? What say I then? that the idol is any thing? or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is anything? But I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should be *joint partakers* in (*Eng. Trans.* "have fellowship with") devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and of the table of devils. Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than

he?" \* In reciting this passage, I have ventured upon some slight alteration of the common English version. The word "communion" is properly defined by Johnson "a participation of something in common," and this, no doubt, is the sense in which it was here employed by our translators. I have exchanged that word for "joint participation," merely for the purpose of showing the manner in which the true meaning of the original expression,† as it is here applied, is fixed by the use, in two other parts of the same passage of the corresponding noun, rendered, *joint partakers*.‡

On a comparison with certain parts of the following chapter, (hereafter to be noticed,) it must, in all fairness, be allowed that the bread and wine, which the apostle here declares to be a "joint participation in the body and blood of Christ," are those which were eaten and drunk, in a literal sense, at the supper called by the apostle himself, *the Lord's Supper*.§ It appears, then, that those who ate and drank together of that bread and wine, were joint partakers of the body and blood of Christ, on the same principle, and in the same sense, that the Jews, who ate together of the sacrifices ordained by the law, were joint partakers of the altar; and the Christians, who united with idolaters in the

\* 1 Cor. x. 15—22.

† κοινωνία.

‡ κοινωνοί.

§ Chap. xi. 20.

eating of meats offered to false gods, were joint partakers with them in *devils*. It is plain, therefore, that the Christian communicants are not here represented *as feeding on the body and blood of Christ*; any more than the Jews are described as feeding on the altar; but only as jointly partaking in those things which had respect to the body and blood of Christ.

I have entered into this examination of the passage before us, not so much for the purpose of disproving the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, as in order to show that the apostle's words give no real countenance to the notion, so generally entertained among Protestants, that those who rightly communicate in the rite of the Lord's Supper *do thereby feed together, in a spiritual sense, on the body and blood of Christ*.

The declarations of this doctrine, unfounded as it appears to be on the authority of Scripture, are in the communion service of the Church of England, both frequent and striking. The "sacrament of the Lord's Supper" is there denominated a "*holy mystery*," and a "*banquet of most heavenly food*." Thanksgiving is enjoined unto God, "for that he hath given his Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, not only to die for us, but also to be our spiritual food and sustenance in that holy sacrament;" and on another occasion, this service states that, when "we receive that holy sacrament, then we

spiritually eat the flesh of Jesus Christ and drink his blood; then we dwell in Christ and Christ in us: we are one with Christ and Christ with us."

By such language a mystical importance is attached to the rite, which appears to have no foundation in its original use as a memorial of the death of Jesus. In these days of increasing light and spirituality, as we may justly esteem them, it is necessary to say but very little on this branch of our subject. Although Christians, while they are partaking of the bread and wine, may sometimes be permitted to "eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man," no arguments need now be advanced to prove that this spiritual eating and drinking has no necessary or even peculiar connexion with any external ceremony; and that, in every time and place, it may be the privilege of the humble Christian, who lives by faith in the Son of God, and whose soul is subjected to the purifying, yet sustaining influence of his Holy Spirit.\* Neither will it be any longer disputed that, when persons of such a character meet in companies for the solemn purpose of worshipping the Father, they may, without any use of the outward ordinance, *feed together, in a spiritual sense, on the body and blood of Christ*, and

\* See John vi. 53, 58, 63.



experience the truest communion with their Holy Head, and one with another in Him.\*

Having premised these remarks on the apostle's description of the Lord's Supper, we may henceforward consider it in that more simple light in which alone I believe it to be regarded, in the present day, by many of those persons who observe it; namely, as an *outward ceremony, constituting part of divine worship, and intended typically to represent, and thus to bring into remembrance, the death and sacrifice of Christ*; and we may proceed to examine those passages of the New Testament which have given rise to the opinion so generally entertained, that such a rite was ordained by our Saviour, and that the practice of it is universally obligatory on believers in Christ. The passages to which I have to refer, under this head, are only two in number. The first is in the Gospel of Luke, who, in describing the last paschal supper which Jesus ate with his disciples shortly before his crucifixion, writes as follows: "And he (Jesus) took bread and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: *this do in remembrance of me*. Likewise, also, the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you." †

\* See Ma'tt. xviii. 20.

† Luke xxii. 19, 20.

The second passage alluded to, contains a declaration of the apostle Paul, which fully confirms the particulars related by Luke. It appears that the Corinthian converts had so greatly abused the practice to which the injunction of Christ had given rise, that, when they met together for the purpose of eating the Lord's Supper in company, there was found among them a total want of order and harmony; and many of them availed themselves of such occasions, for the intemperate indulgence of their carnal appetites; "For, in eating," says the apostle, "every one taketh before other his own supper; and one is hungry and another is drunken." In order to correct habits of so disgraceful a character, Paul sharply reproves these Corinthians, and calls to their recollection the origin and object of the observance. "For I have received of the Lord," says he, "that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you; *this do in remembrance of me.* After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often," adds the apostle, "as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat

this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and *so* let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh condemnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body."\*

It will be observed that, in this address to the Corinthians, the apostle is not *enjoining* upon them the practice of observing the Lord's Supper. The passage contains no *command* of the apostle's to that effect: it was intended solely to warn them against the abuse of that practice, and to explain to them its origin and true purpose. Accordingly, he briefly recites the circumstances which had given rise to it. The knowledge of these circumstances, it appears, he had "received of the Lord;"† and the apostle's statement, founded on the instruction thus given to him on the subject, sub-

\* 1 Cor. xi. 23—29.

† *For I have received of the Lord.* 'Εγὼ γὰρ παρέλαβον ἀπὸ τοῦ Κυρίου. That commentators are by no means unanimous in the opinion that an immediate revelation is here intended, will be sufficiently evinced by the following short abstract, given in Pool's Synopsis, of the remarks made on this passage by certain eminent critics, and particularly by Beza. "It may be doubted whether the apostle learned these things *mediately* from those who were eye and ear witnesses, on the narration of the other apostles, or immediately by revelation. He learned them *of*

stantially accords with the narration of Luke. We are, therefore, to consider it as a fact resting on *confirmed* evidence, that, when our Lord, at his last paschal supper, invited his disciples to take and eat the bread which he had broken, he added, “ *This do in remembrance of me.*” and, further, we learn from the apostle that, after Jesus had handed to them the cup to drink, he repeated a similar command,—“ *This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.*”

Persons who have been long habituated to associate these expressions of our Lord with the rite of the Eucharist, *as they themselves observe it*, are naturally led to explain the former by the latter: and thus, with respect to the passages now quoted, they lose sight of those simple principles of interpretation, which they *the Lord*; that is, as proceeding from the Lord; the information being given to him by Ananias, or the other disciples, or else of the Lord by revelation. In the latter case, however, he would not have said ἀπό, but παρò, according to the usage of Greek authors in general, of the writers of the New Testament in particular, and more especially of Paul himself.” Other commentators understand the passage in a still more general sense, as implying only that the matters which Paul communicated to the Corinthians, respecting the Lord’s Supper, were no invention of his own, but rested on divine authority. So Camero and Calvin. Rosenmüller, one of the most able and impartial of modern biblical critics, expresses a clear judgment that no direct revelation was here alluded to by the apostle; Vide *Schol. in N. T. in loc.*

would, of course, apply to any other part of the sacred volume. I confess I see no other way of accounting for the sentiment, still so prevalent among Christians, that when our Lord, after partaking with his disciples in the Passover supper, said to them, "Do this in remembrance of me," he instituted a religious ceremony, which was thenceforward to form an essential part of worship; and which, in that point of view, was to be binding in all ages, on the believers in Jesus. That the words of Christ, when tried by the test of common rules, and explained by the circumstances under which they were spoken, *do not appear, and cannot be proved, to have been fraught with so extensive a meaning*, will probably be allowed by the candid and considerate critic; and I would suggest that no such meaning can justly be applied to them, for two reasons.

That our Lord's words, in the first place, are not rightly interpreted as relating to a *typical ceremony in connexion with Christian worship*, there arises a strong presumption, on this general ground—that such an interpretation is directly at variance with the acknowledged fact, that the old Jewish system of types was then about to be abrogated by the death of Christ; and with our Saviour's own law, that the Father was now to be worshipped, not according to the shadowy ritual of the Jews and Samaritans, but in spirit and in truth.



Secondly, it is to be observed that the command of Jesus respecting the bread and wine was addressed only to twelve persons, and was of a nature simply *positive*. It is true that all the precepts of Jesus were addressed to those persons who were in his company at the time when they were uttered, and many of them probably to his apostles only; but there is an excellent reason why the bulk of them are to be received as of universal obligation—namely, that they are *moral* in their nature, and belong to that unchangeable law of God, which, when revealed, demands the obedience of all men at all times. But a merely positive precept has no connexion with that unchangeable law, and does nothing more than enjoin, for some specific purpose, a practice *in itself* indifferent. Such a precept, therefore, appears to contain no sufficient *internal* evidence of its being binding on any persons, except those to whom it was actually addressed, and others who were placed under the same peculiar circumstances. I would suggest that a universal obligation, on the followers of any *moral* lawgiver, to obey a precept of the nature now described, cannot be rightly admitted, unless it be by such lawgiver expressly declared; and that its not being so declared, affords an indication that no such universality was intended.

The present argument may be fitly illustrated by another example of a similar nature. On the very

same affecting occasion, when Jesus directed his apostles to observe the practice now under consideration, he also enjoined them to *wash one another's feet*. We read in the Gospel of John that, after that last paschal-supper, Jesus rose from the table, took a towel, girded himself, poured water into a basin, and "began to wash his disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded." After thus evincing the lowliness of his mind, he said to his disciples, "Know ye what I have done unto you? Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, *ye ought also to wash one another's feet; for I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.*" Here was an injunction conveyed to the apostles in words fully as explicit, and with accompaniments equally striking, as was the preceding command respecting the bread and wine. Yet, since that injunction was simply positive, relating to an act of no moral importance in itself, and one which was connected with the peculiar habits of the persons thus addressed—no one supposes that an obedience to such an injunction is necessary for Christians of every age and country. Undoubtedly, that mutual respect and benevolence, of which the washing of one another's feet was thus enjoined on some of his servants as an instance and a sign, is incumbent on all the followers

of Jesus. Universally incumbent upon them, also, is that love and allegiance towards their Saviour, and that dependence upon his atoning death, which the apostles were accustomed to express by their commemorative supper. But, in both cases, according to the view of Friends on the subject, the outward circumstance may be omitted, without any infraction of the revealed will of God.

In confirmation of these arguments, the reader's attention may now be called to a very striking fact; namely, that, in the Gospel of Matthew, which was written by an eye-witness, and at an earlier date than that of Luke, and which contains a very exact description of our Lord's last supper with his-disciples, of the breaking of the bread, of the handing of the cup, and of the comparison made by Jesus of the one with his body and of the other with his blood; the words upon which *alone* could have been founded the institution of this supposed Christian rite—"Do this in remembrance of me"—*are omitted*. We are not to conclude from this omission that those words were not spoken. That they were spoken, on the contrary, is certain, on the authority of both Luke and Paul. But, since Matthew describes all the circumstances of the occasion, and gives the whole of our Lord's address, with the single exception of these words, we can hardly suppose him to have understood

that the precept of Jesus was of that *very leading* importance which is generally imagined ; or, that our Lord then instituted a rite which was, in every age of the church, to form an essential part of Christian worship. Precisely the same observation applies to the Gospel of Mark, which is supposed to have been written under the immediate superintendence of the apostle Peter.

What then may be deemed a fair and reasonable interpretation of our Lord's very simple precept ? and in what signification would the twelve apostles, to whom these words were addressed, naturally understand them ? In order to give a satisfactory answer to this inquiry, we may, in the first instance, observe that the apostles were all Jews or Galileans ; that they had long been accustomed to observe the rites of the supper of the Passover, and that among those rites were numbered (as has been already stated) the breaking of the bread, and the handing of the cup, with the blessing and giving of thanks. As they had already been habituated to these customs, so was the Lord Jesus well aware that they would still maintain them : for, as it has been already remarked, the apostles continued in the practice of parts of the Jewish ritual, long after the crucifixion of our Lord ; and, although that ritual was abolished by his death, the sudden disuse of it does not appear to have been

enjoined upon them by their divine Master. Having these facts in our view, we may reasonably interpret the words of Jesus as commanding nothing more than that his apostles should call *him* to their recollection when they met to celebrate the supper of the Passover. "This cup," said Jesus, "is the new testament in my blood." Now, it was not every cup of wine which represented the new testament in the blood of Christ; it was the cup of wine drunk at the supper of the Passover—an institution which they were then celebrating, and which, in some of its circumstances, was expressly typical of the death of the Messiah. It appears, then, by no means very improbable that it was to the cup of the Passover exclusively that our Saviour's injunction applied—"This do ye, *as oft as ye drink it*, in remembrance of me;" that is, as often as ye meet together to celebrate the supper of the Passover, and to drink of that cup, which represents the new testament in my blood, take care that ye forget not the true purport of the ceremony—do it in remembrance of *me*.

Such appears to be an easy and natural interpretation of our Lord's words. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that they are capable of a sense somewhat more extensive. Although the breaking of the bread, the handing of the wine, &c., formed a part of the Jewish ceremonial order of the Passover supper, there



is reason to believe that a similar method was observed in those more common meals, of which the Jews were accustomed to partake in one another's company. Thus, when Jesus, on a subsequent occasion, "sat at meat" with the two disciples at Emmaus, we again find him blessing, breaking and distributing the bread ;\* and when Paul had induced his companions, on the voyage, to unite with him taking the needful food, we read that " he took bread, and gave thanks to God in the presence of them all : and when he had broken it, he began to eat."† Such being the common practice of the Jews, it is very probable that the apostles might understand our Lord's injunction as not confined to the Passover supper, but as extending to other more familiar occasions, when they might be gathered together to partake of a common meal. On these occasions, as well as at the Passover supper, they might consider it a duty laid upon them by their beloved Master, to break their bread, and to drink of their cup, not only for the satisfaction of their natural appetites, but in commemoration of the body which was broken, and of the blood which was shed, for their sakes.

That the Lord Jesus was thus understood by some

\* Luke xxiv. 30.

† Acts xxvii. 35.

of his hearers, may be collected from the known practice of the church, at the very earliest period of its history. Of those numerous persons who were converted by means of the ministry of Peter, on the day of Pentecost, we read that “they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.”\* Since the “breaking of bread” is here mentioned among other signs of religious communion, it probably signifies (according to the general opinion of biblical critics) *that* breaking of bread which was introduced as a memorial of the death of Christ. Nevertheless, that the practice in question was observed as a part of the social meal, is evident from the immediate context. “And all that believed,” adds the historian, “were together, and had all things common . . . and they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and *breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.*”† On another occasion, when we are informed that, “on the first day of the week,” the disciples at Troas “came together to break bread;”‡ there is no reason to suppose that they met for the purpose of performing a religious ceremony. It appears, rather, that they came together to partake of a brotherly repast, of

\* Acts ii. 42.

† Vers. 44, 46.

‡ Acts xx. 7.

which it is probable that *one* particular object was the joint commemoration of the death of their Lord. After Paul had taken the opportunity, afforded him by this meeting, of preaching at length to the disciples, it is obvious that he brake bread with them for the refreshment of his body, and for the satisfaction of the demands of nature. “When, he, therefore, was come up again,” says Luke, “and *had broken bread, and eaten*, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed.”\*

Lastly, the same fact is evident from the description given by Paul of the abuses which had crept in among his Corinthian converts in their method of conducting these common repasts. “When ye come together, therefore, into one place, this is not to eat the Lord’s supper. For, in eating, every one taketh before other his own supper; and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church (or assembly) of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.”† After thus reproving them, and after explaining to them, in a passage already cited, the origin and true object of the observance which they had thus abused, the apostle, zealous as he was for the right

\* Ver. 11.

† 1 Cor. xi. 20—22.

order of this Christian meal, concludes with the following exhortation: "Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another; and if any man hunger,\* let him eat at home, that ye come not together unto condemnation."

The supper, which the apostle here describes as the Lord's Supper, which the Corinthians had so shamefully misconducted, and during the course of which the bread was broken, and the wine handed about, in commemoration of the death of Christ, was probably the same as was otherwise called "love," or the "supper of love." "Their coming together," says Theophylact, on 1 Cor. xi. 20, (or rather Chrysostom, from whom his commentaries were borrowed,) "was intended as a sign of love and fellowship; and he *denominates this social banquet the Lord's Supper*, because it was the imitation of that awful supper which the Lord ate with his disciples."† These suppers of love, or "love-feasts," are alluded to by the apostles Peter,‡ and Jude; § and are described by Pliny,|| as well as

\* *Vide Grotii Comm. in loc.* "Est χλευασμὸς (*irrisio acerba*): Loquitur enim tanquam pueris qui ita solent esse ὀξύπεινοι (*famēlici*) ut quidvis arripiant, nec alios ad partem vocent, neque velint σῶκα μερίζειν (*ficus partiri*)."

† So Grotius, Estius, Justinian, and others--see Poli Synopsis.

‡ 2 Pet. ii. 13.      § Ver. 12.      || Epin. lib. x. 97.

by Tertullian \* and other early fathers.† It appears that they were frugal public repasts, of which the poor and the rich, in the early Christian churches, partook together, and which were regarded both as the symbols and pledges of brotherly love. Such, then, was the “Lord’s Supper” of the primitive Christians; such were the occasions on which they were accustomed to break their bread, and drink their wine, as a memorial of the body and blood of Christ.‡

\* *Apol. adv. Gentes*, cap. 39.

† *Clem. Alex. Pæd.* lib. ii. cap. 1, *Constit. Apostol.* lib. ii. cap. 28, &c.

‡ Vide *Schleusner Lex. in loc. ἀγάπη* No. 7. “Ἀγάπαι agapæ, (love-feasts,) fuerunt convivium publica in conventibus Christianorum sacris instituta, conjuncta in primitiva et apostolica ecclesia cum celebratione festiva cœnæ Dominicæ, ita dicta quod Christianæ charitatis symbola essent et tesseræ,” &c. The celebration of the Eucharist, and that of the love-feast, appear to be mentioned by Ignatius (A. D. 101) as identical. “Let that be considered,” says the ancient father, “a valid Eucharist which is under the care of a bishop, and in which he takes a part. Where the bishop appears, there let the people attend. It is unlawful either to baptize or to celebrate the love-feast without the bishop.” *Ep. ad. Smyrn.* ch. 8. So we are informed by Tertullian, (A. D. 200,) that, even in his day, the Eucharist was received by Christians in connexion with their meals: “Eucharistiæ sacramentum et in tempore victus, et omnibus mandatum a Domino, etiam antelucanis cœtibus, nec



To the simple practice which thus prevailed among these primitive Christians (if preserved within proper bounds) there appears to be nothing which can fairly be objected. It was a practice which might be classed rather under the head of pious customs than under that of direct religious ceremonies. It was, perhaps, little more than giving to one of the common occasions of life a specific direction of an edifying character; and, under the peculiar circumstances of these early disciples, it might be considered no inconsistent result of that general law, that, whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, all is to be done to the glory of God, and in the *name of the Lord Jesus*. But, appropriate as these feasts of charity might be to the condition of the infant church, when the believers were comparatively few in number, and in a considerable degree possessed all things in common, they would evidently be much less adapted for the use of those vast multitudes of persons, very slightly connected with each other, who profess Christianity in modern times. As the numbers increased in any church, who would, as members of it, possess a right to attend the *love-feasts*, there would necessarily arise a great danger of abuse in such a practice; and that

de aliorum manu quam præsidentium sumimus." *De Coron. Milit. cap. 3, Ed. Semleri, iv. 341.* See also *Grotius and Whitby* on 1 Cor. x. & xi.

this abuse actually took place in the church of Corinth to an alarming and disgraceful degree, we have already noticed on the authority of the apostle Paul.

On the one hand, therefore, we may allow that those persons who continue the observance of the Lord's Supper, not as a religious ceremony constituting a necessary part of divine worship, but *on the simple system of the primitive Christians*, are not without their warrant, for the adoption of such a course. On the other hand, it is no less evident that the apparent unsuitableness of the custom to the present condition of the visible church, its known liability to abuse, and more especially, its close *affinity* with the abolished ritual of the Jews, appear to afford sufficient reasons for its discontinuance.

That there is nothing in the history of the origin of that custom which precludes, under so obvious a change of circumstances, the *liberty of its disuse*, the reader will probably allow, for reasons already stated. Here, however, it appears necessary to notice an expression of the apostle Paul's, from which many persons have derived an opinion that this practice is binding on believers in Jesus, *until the end of the world*. "For as oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup," says the apostle, in a passage already cited, "*ye do show the Lord's death till he come.*" The inference deduced from these words respecting the *necessary*

permanence of the rite of the Lord's Supper appears to be ill-founded. For, in the first place, they contain no *command* to the Corinthians to continue the practice in question until the Lord's coming: and in the second place, it is evident, from the context, that it was not here the apostle's object to impress upon his friends the *duration* of the custom, but rather its *meaning* or *direction*. The stress of his declaration plainly lies upon the words, "*Ye do show the Lord's death.*" The words "*till he come*" appear to be added, as a kind of reservation, for the purpose of conveying the idea that, when the Lord himself should come, such a memorial of his death would be obsolete and unnecessary. It is the belief of Friends that the *principle* on which this reservation is made, substantially agrees with their own sentiment, that the spiritual presence of the Lord Jesus with his disciples, and the direct communion with him, which they are even now permitted to enjoy, virtually abrogate any practice in his service, which is of a merely symbolical character.

The view now taken of the apostle's doctrine will fitly introduce a closing remark—that, while Friends consider it to be their duty to abstain from that ritual participation in bread and wine, so usually observed among their fellow Christians, there are no persons who insist more strongly than they do on that which they deem to be the only needful *supper of the Lord*. That

supper, according to their apprehension, is of a spiritual nature. Now, it is a circumstance which strongly confirms this general view, that our Lord availed himself of the very occasion which has given rise among Christians to the rite of the Eucharist, in order to direct the attention of his disciples to the supper now alluded to—a repast of a totally different description, and one which may be enjoyed by the disciples of Christ independently of every outward ordinance. “With desire I have desired,” said Jesus to his apostles, “to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for *I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.*” \* Again, “This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins. *But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.*” † Again, “Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that *ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom.*” ‡

We may, indeed, believe that these gracious declarations are accomplished *in all their fullness*, only in the heavenly state of happiness and glory; but it is sufficiently evident, and is allowed by various com-

\* Luke xxii. 15, 16.    † Matt. xxvi. 28, 29.    ‡ Luke xxii. 28–30.

mentators, that our Lord's expressions, now cited, cannot be considered as relating exclusively to the world to come. When Jesus Christ had died on the cross, a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, the type of the Passover had received its fulfillment in the kingdom of God. When his blood had been shed for many, for the remission of sins, and when he had ascended to the right hand of the Father Almighty, that kingdom or reign, conducted through the mediation of the Messiah, was established in the earth. Then, therefore, did the day arrive, as we may fairly deduce from these impressive passages, when Jesus was again to eat the Passover with his disciples, and to drink the new wine in their company: according to his own declaration, on a subsequent occasion, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will *come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.*"\* When the faithful disciples of our glorified Redeemer open the door of the heart at the voice of his Holy Spirit; when, more especially, they are engaged in rendering unto him their joint and willing service, and are worshipping God in unison; he is often pleased to come in among them, to sup with them, and to permit them to sup with him. Then does he bring them into

\* Rev. iii. 20.



a holy fellowship with the Father, with himself, and one with another ; breaks for them the bread of life, and gives them to drink of his most precious blood ; and thus, while their souls are refreshed, nourished, and comforted, they are brought in a living and effective manner, to the remembrance of that crucified Lord who is their strength, their joy, and their salvation.

While Friends believe it best to abstain from that outward ceremony, which their Christian brethren have adopted, may they ever be partakers of the true supper of the Lord ! May they ever remember the indispensable necessity of that living and abiding faith in Christ crucified, by which alone they can enjoy the communion of his body and blood ! “ Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him. As the living Father has sent me, and I live by the Father ; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven ; not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead ; he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.” \*

\* John vi. 53—58.

On a general review, then, of the particular passages of the New Testament which relate to the observance of the Lord's Supper, I may venture to recapitulate my own sentiments, that such a practice has no proper or necessary connexion with a spiritual feeding on the body and blood of Christ—that the history of our Lord's last paschal supper with his disciples affords no reason for believing that he then instituted a religious ceremony, which was thenceforth to form an essential part of the worship of Christians—that his injunction on that occasion, may be understood, either, as relating solely to the rites of the Passover, or as intended to give a religious direction to the more common social repasts of his disciples—that it was in connexion with such repasts, and particularly with their love-feasts, that the primitive Christians were accustomed to commemorate the death of Christ—that the custom of those love-feasts, however appropriate to the circumstances of the earliest disciples, soon fell into abuse as the number of believers increased, and appears to be, in a great degree, inapplicable to the present condition of the Christian world—and, lastly, that under the influence of the spiritual manifestations of our Redeemer, we may, without the bread and wine, participate in that *true* supper of the Lord, which he has himself so clearly upheld to the expectation of his disciples, and which alone is indis-

pensable for the edification, consolation, and salvation of his people.

Although, for the reasons detailed in the present disquisition, it may fairly be concluded that the practices of water-baptism and the Lord's Supper are by no means needful, it is certain that these practices have been very generally observed by the professors of the Christian name. This fact is easily explained, not only by the known power of example and tradition, but also by that principle in our nature, which leads us so commonly to place our dependence upon outward and visible things. Man is naturally prone to trust in anything rather than the invisible Creator ; and he is ever ready to make the formal ordinance a part of his religious system, because he can rely upon it with ease to himself, and may often find in it a plausible substitute for the mortification of his own will. Now, I would suggest that the ceremonies which we have been considering, so far from being like the moral law of God, *universally* salutary, are evidently fraught with no little danger, as occasions by which this deceitful disposition in the human heart is naturally excited and brought into action. And here our appeal may be made, not only to theory, but to facts ; for, it is indisputable that the outward rites of baptism and the Supper, as observed among the professors of Christianity, have been the means of leading multi-

tudes into gross superstition. How many thousands of persons are there, as every spiritually-minded Christian will allow, who place upon these outward rites a reliance which is warranted neither by reason nor by Scripture, and which, so far from bringing them nearer to God—so far from reminding them of Christ—operates in the most palpable manner as a *diversion* from a true and living faith in their Creator and Redeemer! How often has the ignorant sinner, even in the hour of death, depended on the “sacrament” of the Lord’s Supper as upon a saving ordinance! And how many a learned theologian, both ancient and modern, has been found to insist on the dangerous tenet, that the rite of baptism is *regeneration*!

While the Society of Friends believe that ordinances which are so peculiarly liable to abuse, and which have been the means of exciting, not only the superstitions now alluded to, but endless divisions and contentions, and many cruel persecutions in the church, cannot truly appertain to the law of God; while they are persuaded, on the contrary, that the spirituality of that law is opposed to the continued observance of any typical religious rite; and while, on these grounds, they consider themselves amply justified in the omission of such practices; they entertain, I trust, no disposition whatsoever to judge their fellow believers who conscientiously make use of these ceremonies. There

are, as I believe, many persons who avail themselves of the rites in question, on principles which cannot be deemed superstitious; and who even derive, through these *signs and memorials*, some real instruction and edification. Such instances may serve to convince us that God continues to accept the sincere heart, and that he is still pleased to bless a variety of means to a variety of conditions. Nevertheless, I cannot but deem it probable, that as serious Christians, not of our profession, draw yet nearer in spirit to an omnipresent Deity, they will be permitted to find, in *the disuse of all types*, “a more excellent way.”



## ADDENDUM.

A. D. 1834.

It has not been without pain and conflict to myself that I have pleaded, or at least apologized, for the disuse of practices, which many sincere Christians would seem to value like the apple of their eye. Yet the feelings which are thus entertained on the subject by so large a proportion of the followers of Christ, may be one reason why Friends have been *led* to uphold a more spiritual standard; nor could we, in my opinion, forsake the high ground which we have hitherto occupied, respecting forms and ceremonies in worship, without inflicting a serious injury on the cause of truth; and therefore on the whole church of our Lord Jesus Christ.

After a lapse of more than ten years since this work was published, and after many a review of the points here discussed, I do not find that I have any thing material to alter in the foregoing chapter. It may not, however, be amiss, even at the risk of repetition, now to state, in a concentrated manner, the views of baptism and the Lord's Supper, which continue to be satisfactory to my own mind, and on which it seems graciously permitted to repose. For this purpose I beg to offer

to the attention of the reader the following propositions, which I wish to be regarded not in the light of dogmatic *assertions*—for these I can have no right to make—but as the plain expression of my own deliberate sentiments.

I. Under the gospel dispensation the worship of God is at once simple and spiritual; it is the communion of the soul of man with his Creator, under the direct influence of the Spirit, and through the sole mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

II. Consistently with this truth, all observances in worship which are of a purely ceremonial nature, all mere types and shadows, are at once fulfilled and abrogated by the great realities of the gospel of Christ.

III. The rite of water-baptism exactly answers to this description. It is in its nature *wholly* ceremonial; it is a *mere* shadow or figure, and therefore, unless some peculiar and sufficient cause be shown to the contrary, it can have no permanent place in the system of *Christianity*.

IV. The history of the rite affords no evidence that it is an exception to the general rule; but rather the contrary. Washing or dipping in water, under various forms, was ordained as a part of the Mosaic ritual, and was often practised as a figure of purification. In that peculiar mode, in which John the Baptist and the apostles used it, it was employed by the Jews, both

before and after the Christian era, on the admission of proselytes into the church; and in all these cases, it was the obvious type of repentance and conversion. John, who lived under the law, baptized by divine authority; and Jesus himself submitted to his baptism, as part of the righteousness *which then was*. The apostles observed the rite, as they did a variety of other Jewish ceremonies, and having connected it in their practice with conversion to Christianity, they applied it even to the Gentiles. But Christ himself, as the Institutor of the gospel dispensation, baptized not; and Paul, who to a great extent personally abstained from the use of this ceremony, declares that he had received no commission from Christ to perform it.

V. Shortly before his ascension, the Lord Jesus commanded his apostles to go and make disciples of all nations, "baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." That the use made by the apostles of water-baptism is not to be ascribed to this command, is clear from the fact that they employed the rite before the command was issued. That the command is to be understood only in a spiritual sense—as indicating "the washing of water by the word"—may be inferred from the figurative use which our Lord has elsewhere made of the word baptize, from his own doctrine respecting the spirituality of true worship, and from the distinction

which he so clearly drew, between the water-baptism of John, and Christian baptism by the Spirit. It may also be inferred from the declaration of Paul—an undoubted partaker in the apostolic commission—that the Lord Jesus did not send him to baptize with water but to preach the gospel.

Had a typical ceremony thus binding on the church been here instituted, the analogy of the Jewish law would lead us to expect the most precise directions, as to the persons who should perform it; and as to the manner, times, and circumstances, in which it should be performed. But no such directions are given, and Christians who admit the continued authority of the rite, are left, in reference to these particulars, in a state of irremediable doubt and dispute.

VI. In the mean time Christianity has a baptism of its own, of which our Lord and his apostles made frequent mention, without attaching to it the condition or accompaniment of any outward ceremony. It is that of Christ himself, “with the Holy Ghost and with fire;” and is productive of a new birth, by the Spirit. It is the baptism which “now saveth us,” and which brings the “answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ;” it is “the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.” This baptism properly agrees with the nature and character of Christianity, and coincides

with that worship of God, which is "in spirit and in truth." Without it, the sinner cannot be converted, or joined in fellowship with the church ; without it, the soul of the believer can never be prepared for an entrance into heaven.

VII. Whatsoever opinion therefore they may entertain respecting the ceremonial rite, this is the baptism on which Christians of every denomination ought chiefly to insist, and in so doing, they will not fail to experience "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

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I. When the Lord Jesus celebrated his last Pass-over-supper with his disciples, "he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take eat ; this is my body which is broken for you ; this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood : this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me."

II. The words used by our Lord on this solemn occasion, afford no more evidence that the bread which he brake was *itself* his body, than they do, that the cup which he held in his hand, was itself the new testament in his blood. The bread was distinct and separate from his body, occupying a different part of



space, and could not possibly be the same with it. But the bread represented his body, which was about to be broken for many; and the wine in the cup was a symbol of his blood, which was about to be shed for many, for the remission of sins.

III. It was at an actual meal, intended for bodily refreshment, that our Saviour thus addressed his disciples; and when, in conformity with his command, the earliest Christians partook of "the Lord's Supper," there was no mystery in the observance; much less was any miraculous change wrought upon their food. Convened from time to time, *at their social repasts*, they brake their bread, and handed round their cup of wine, in the sweet fellowship of the gospel of Christ, and in solemn remembrance of his death.

IV. The Scriptures do not appear to afford us any sufficient proof that the command on which this custom was founded, was intended for the whole church of Christ in all ages, any more than our Lord's injunction to his disciples to wash one another's feet. There is nothing however in the practice itself, as it was thus observed by the primitive believers, inconsistent with the general law, that all mere types and figures in worship are abolished under the gospel. Let Christians, when they eat their meat together "with gladness and singleness of heart," still be reminded *by their very food*, of the Lord who bought them. Let them,

more often than the day, gratefully recollect their divine Master, “who bare our sins in *his own body*, on the tree,” and whose *precious blood* was shed for all mankind.

V. But no sooner was this practice changed from its original simple character, employed as a part of the public worship of God, and converted into a purely ceremonial rite, than the state of the case was entirely altered. The great principle that God is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth, was infringed; and, as far as relates to this particular, a return took place to the old legal system of *forms* and *shadows*.

VI. It is probably in consequence of this change—the invention and contrivance of man—that an ordinance, of which the sole purpose was the thankful remembrance of the death of Jesus, has been abused to an astonishing extent. Nothing among professing Christians has been perverted into an occasion of so much superstition; few things have been the means of staining the annals of the church with so much blood.

VII. “*It is the Spirit that quickeneth,*” as our Saviour himself has taught us, “*the flesh profiteth nothing;*” and Christianity is distinguished by a *spiritual* supper, as well as baptism. To partake of *this* supper is essential to our salvation. We can never have a claim on the hopes and joys set before us in the gospel, un-

less we feed, by a living faith, on the bread which came down from heaven, and giveth life to the world—unless we “eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood.” Now they who partake of this celestial food, are fellow members of one body; they are joined together by a social compact of the dearest and holiest character, because they all commune with the same glorious Head. They are *one in Christ Jesus*; and when they meet in solemn worship—Christ himself being present—they are guests, even here, at the table of their Lord, and drink the wine “new,” with him “in his kingdom.”

May this be the happy experience of all who read this volume, whether they use, or disuse what is called the sacrament of the supper!



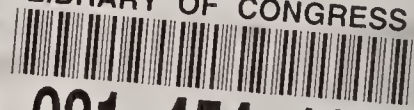












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